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ABSTRACT

Recent political, social, and economic changes in sub-Saharan Africa have created a new demand for English teaching on a vast scale. The immediate aim of English teaching programs in the French-speaking countries should be to increase the number of national teachers of English who can supply the local school systems. Teacher training programs in francophone Africa range from quite carefully developed down to inadequate and struggling. In most countries there is only one Ecole Normale Superieure, where students can take both content courses and teacher training courses. Many more of these schools are needed. The pattern of conducting English classes in French, following a French syllabus, and using French-published texts, is beginning to change with the introduction into the school systems of new teachers trained in audiolingual methods. Since many newly certified teachers are often placed in remote areas where their contact with English is extremely limited, it is imperative that a program of inservice training, inspection, and seminars be established to continue a new teacher's contact with English and to reinforce his competence. The extreme shortage of books throughout the continent must also be remedied if African English teaching programs are going to continue to improve. (PP)

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Teacher Training for the Non-Native Speaker in Francophone Africa

Recent political, social, and economic changes in Francophone Africa have created a new demand for English teaching on a vast scale. The multiplication of secondary schools in Africa and the inclusion of English as a required subject in the curriculum have increased the already severeshortage of competent and qualified English teachers. Developing programs to train teachers, in pre-service courses, or to train those who will train the teachers in in-service sessions, should be as much a policy of the countries concerned as getting English into the secondary school syllabus in the first place. The immediate long-term aims of English teaching in the French-speaking countries should be to build up a cadre of national teachers of English who can supply the local school systems. The paper will discuss the problem of teacher training in Francophone Africa and will offer an overall view of the impact of English in Africa and its potential for development with an adequate supply of teachers.

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Teacher Training for the Non-Native Speaker in Francophone Africa

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Recent political, social, and economic changes in sub-Saharan Africa have created a new demand for language teaching on a vast scale. As an article which appeared recently in the New York Times (1/30/74, p. 8) pointed out, foreign language study is probably the largest single educational activity in independent black Africa.

As considerations of diplomacy, commercial relations, tourism, etc., gain importance in the countries of former French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa, independent since 1960, the teaching of English is taking on increasing significance. English is a required subject in the curricula of all secondary schools. Instruction in English begins in the first year (6ème) and continues through the baccalauréat year (classe terminale). Generally three to four hours a week are devoted to the study of English.

With growing "scholarization" in Africa, the multiplication of secondary schools, and the dominance of English over any other foreign language in the school curriculum, the already severe shortage of competent and qualified English teachers is becoming a serious problem. Most countries rely on expatriates for their English teaching—British, Americans, French, Canadians, Ghanaians, Nigerians, may all be found teaching in varying numbers throughout francophone Africa. But how long can a steady supply of expatriate English teachers be found to fill the need-- and how effective are they anyway? Already the French are phasing out their involvement in ELT in Africa. Volunteer organizations such as the British VSO or American Peace Corps are shifting their emphasis away from actual teaching and more toward teacher training. This significant trend points up what I have long believed should be the immediate

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concern of English teaching in the French-speaking countries: to build up a cadre of national teachers of English who can supply the local school systems. The advantages of professional commitment to the educational system and national awareness, which no expatriate teacher can fully exploit, are concommitant with this type of teacher training.

Teacher training programs in francophone Africa range from quite carefully developed down to inadequate and struggling. Before discussing some of the features of TEFL training, however, I would like to give you a brief idea of the problem we are up against in bringing the number of national teachers up to meet current requirements in just a few countries:

Country	Approx. total number of English teachers	Nationals (approx.)
Central African Republic	unknown	12-15
Chad	80	12
Gabon	75	15
Ivory Coast	240	50
Niger	72	13
Upper Volta	unknown	10

The picture is brighter in Togo where 128 of 159 teachers are Togolese, and positively brilliant in Mali where 95% of the 225 English teachers are Malian. (There was an intense "Malianization" of the school system a few years ago). Classes average about 45-50 pupils. Many are much larger. One Peace Corps teacher in the C.A.R. is struggling with four 6ème classes of 90 pupils each!

It has been estimated that three to four times the present number of English teachers would be needed if class size were reduced and if more children reached secondary education. Fewer than about 40% of the children go into secondary education in Senegal, for example. The problem is compounded by the fact that 60% or more of the population in these countries is 16 years old or younger, and the flood of children reaching school age is increasing.

Country	Ecole Normale Supérieure	University
Cameroon	X	X
Central African Rep.	X	X
Chad		X
Gabon	X	X
Ivory Coast	X	X
Mali	X	
Niger	X	(opens this year)
Senegal	X	X
Togo	X	X
Upper Volta		X

In most countries there is one Ecole Normale Supérieure, where students take subject or content courses as well as teacher training. Many more are needed. One of the anomalies of African teacher training is that students who prepare at the ENS receive theory, methodology, and practice teaching, but qualify to teach in the lower secondary cycle only, while university graduates with a major in English usually have no methods and no practice teaching or comparable training, yet will teach in the upper cycle. The qualifying diploma for the lower cycle is the Certificat d'Aptitude professionnelle pour les Collèges d'Enseignement général (CAP/CEG), generally a three-year course. A fourth year of study, either at the university (where one exists) or abroad, will lead to the Certificat d'Aptitude professionnelle pour l'Enseignement secondaire (CAPES), the equivalent of a license, which certifies a teacher for teaching at the baccalauréat level. University students take the Diplôme universitaire d'Etudes littéraires (DUEL) after two years (and may then teach) or continue for the license d'Anglais, often in France. Graduate study in English is all but non-existent in francophone Africa.

In a typical teacher training course much of the work of the first year consists of what amounts to an intensive revision of basic English, essentially remedial work in structural grammar and oral skills. Students may have had up to seven years of English in secondary school but their command of the spoken

language is shaky, especially as the system is still geared to the passing of the French "bac," an examination based on reading and translation of texts. Ten to twelve hours a week are spent on English studies which include standard audio-lingual language work (using lab equipment where such is available), grammar review, phonetics and pronunciation including contrastive analysis, aural comprehension, written exercises in comprehension, paragraph development and summary writing, oral fluency (free discussion), and literature. Literature in the first year may include African novels in English or a play. Sometimes the books studied are in simplified English because, as the course program for the ENS in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, points out, this may be the first time the students have ever read a complete book in English-- the French-published high school texts in English literature that they have studied follow the old French format of extracts or "morceaux choisis". The intention then is to encourage students to read more consistently sustained works for general enjoyment.

A general introduction to ELT methodology may be presented in the first year (Gabon, C.A.R., Senegal, for example), but takes no more than two hours of the time allocated to English, and consists mainly of identifying basic language skills and discussing general theories of language learning. This theory continues in the second year, along with more intensive work in written and oral language, phonetics and pronunciation, literature and civilization. In Gabon, one semester each is devoted to American Civilization and British Civilization. Only university students in the Section des langues vivantes with a major in English receive what amounts to a truncated course in British or American literature. Literary studies at the various ENS's tend to be more eclectic, drawing randomly from works of British, American,and anglophone African writers.

Methodology and teaching practice assume primary importance in the third year, when students spend more time in observation, discussion, and criticism of lessons, lesson planning, analysis and adaptation of textbooks, and peer teaching. There are no practice schools attached to any of the Ecoles normales, which requires that for actual classroom experience, students must be apportioned out among the existing local secondary schools. Ideally they would be assigned to master teachers and work under some supervision, but quite often the student teacher is either on his own, or assigned to a class where the teacher has had less training in modern methodology than the student. In those countries where the audio-lingual approach is being introduced, this can result in a head-on clash with a teacher entrenched in an out-dated methodology or firmly wedded to the French system of English language teaching. Since ENS and university teacher-trainers tend to be British or American in nationality and/or formation, a small revolution is indeed occuring in the way English is being taught in the secondary schools of francophone Africa. Until recently there had been little emphasis on speaking English and classes were frequently conducted in French, following a French syllabus and using, where available, French-published texts, most commonly L'Anglais vivant, L'Anglais par l'Illustration, and L'Anglais par l'Action in the classes up to 3ème. Some improvement in content has been achieved with the series L'Anglais en Afrique, but the method remains largely unchanged, and English is taught as if it were a form of French grammar in a new code. Textbook adaptation and techniques of micro-teaching are therefore important elements in the teacher training process. Work is being done with contextualization, creating a "centre d'intérêt" through which to present the lesson, dialogues, repetition and substitution drilling,

question/answer techniques, use of gesture and drawings, silent method, visual aids --these and other ideas which may seem well-established, even "old" to us, are only now being enthusiastically studied and applied in Africa. As one teacher trainer begged me, "Please don't come to us with your cognitive code and new generative grammar- transformation ideas when we are only just now making a break-through with audio-lingual. We are only just advancing to the front lines and already we meet you coming back the other way!"

Much of the credit for the spreading influence of audio-lingual methodology must go to the Peace Corps and its work both in actual classroom teaching and in TEFL seminars, workshops, and in-country training. They are overcoming the reluctance of African students to speak the language and teaching them to regard it as a very real tool of communication. Their influence is changing the system from within, working on the syllabus, the exams, the texts --a task which most African teachers with whom I have apoken are only too eager to continue.

The only real experimentation with English teaching methodology is being carried out at the Centre de Linguistique appliquée de Dakar. The "C.L.A.D. method" for teaching English which this Center has developed is particularly interesting, as it is gradually replacing the French texts which have been in wide use, and is also being introduced into some of the other francophone African countries. The method is called "audio-visual", since it utilizes tapes and a felt board with cut-out figures, but in fact it is more audio-oral, as few schools have these sophisticated materials at their disposal. C.L.A.D. holds a training period of seven to ten days at the beginning of each academic year when about 70 teachers who have never taught with this method are initiated into the application of oral techniques, presentation of dialogues, by what we would call the mimicry-memorization technique, repetition and substitution drills,

etc. C.L.A.D. personnel make visits to the schools later in the year to advise and follow up on the training period. There are certainly inadequacies and imperfections in the texts and the method, but it is the first really "indigenous" aural-oral approach to gain acceptance in Africa.

It is gradually dawning on francophone Africa that French, the official language and the language of instruction, is in fact a foreign language and needs to be taught as such. This may eventually put English and French on a more equal footing as they are taught in the schools. It is encouraging that in most countries the policy is to increase the teaching of English. But it is unfortunate that it is being required in all secondary schools without adequate teachers or teacher training.

The scarcity of teachers' colleges of course is a contributing factor to this inadequacy. And who will the teacher-trainers be? Most commonly, they are expatriate experts and pedagogues supplied by technical assistance programs: British Council, Canadian foreign aid, American Fulbright and Peace Corps, French Coopération, or UNESCO. This may result in a methodology, the emphasis of which changes from year to year, depending on who has been recruited for the TEFL program. One class I observed was being thoroughly baffled by a professor's presentation of theoretical transformational grammar, complete with symbols, arrows and technical jargon.

Since text books for teacher training are all but unavailable, the professors must often create their own material for grammar, written work, listening comprehension, discussion sessions, and courses on literature and civilization. While this is usually a very good idea, and produces much relevant subject matter for the students to work with, it also imposes an additional burden and overload on the teacher-trainers. Some of the American

methodology texts I have found in use in those normal schools fortunate enough to have them include Lado, Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach; Finocchiaro, Teaching English as a Second Language: from Theory to Practice; Politzer, Foreign Language Learning: A Linguistic Introduction, and some of the Dixson books. British texts are most commonly those dealing with language: Christopherson, An English Phonetics Course; Thomson and Martinet, A Practical English Grammar; W. Stannard Allen, Living English Structure and Living English Speech. The French texts, Pédagogie de l'Anglais (Girard et al) and Réquédat, Les exercises structuraux, are also in use. Widespread use of these or any books is the exception rather than the rule, however, and teacher-trainers must rely on their own knowledge, or make use of anything which comes to hand. Mimeograph equipment is generally available, so a lot of time may also be spent in copying and running off material.

Newly certified teachers are often placed in remote schools where their daily contact with English is limited to what they themselves teach and hear in their classrooms. This makes it imperative that a program of in-service training, inspection, and seminars be established to continue a new teacher's contact with the language and reinforce his competence. Inspection is a somewhat haphazard affair, and in many countries there is no national inspector for English simply because there is no one with sufficient competence to undertake this responsibility. Or the inspectors may be of French or other nationality which only adds to the African teacher's feeling of insufficiency. Seminars are being organized with increasing regularity as a means to bring English teachers together for a period of from three days to two weeks, for lectures, films, discussions and workshops on some aspect of methodology and curriculum development. These are most frequently joint efforts sponsored by the Ministry of Education and the U.S.

Information Service, Peace Corps, or British Council. Often, seminar work is the first exposure a practicing teacher has had to various techniques.

The desperate shortage of books throughout Africa is nowhere more keenly felt than by English teachers. The USIS library is often their only source for reading material in English either for pleasure or for professional advancement. Books in English are generally not available for sale at local bookstores.

Inspite of all these problems, I have consistently been surprised by the competence and quality of some of the teaching I have observed. True, some of it is less than inspired, or even downright disastrous, and one yearns for the bright 6ème pupil whose eagerness to learn English is quickly quashed by an oversized class and an indolent teacher. But on the whole, advances are being made.

There are thirteen former French colonies in sub-Saharan Africa which remain officially francophone: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo Republic, Dahomey, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and Upper Volta. Gaining their cultural independence following their political independence has become a goal of considerable importance, and breaking the French mold in education is one step which most young teachers with whom I have spoken feel most urgently. At my best guess, based on known figures for nine of these, there are probably no more than 650 TEFL students presently enrolled in all three years of teacher training in all thirteen countries. The changes are therefore coming slowly, but they are coming --even when as happened in one country to a young teacher of my acquaintance, one lands in prison for agitating too actively for reform. We have only to con-

sider that just a few years ago, most of the normal schools and universities on the continent did not exist.

English is seen as a magic key to unlock the door to all the wonders of the modern world: from James Brown to space exploration. Francophone Africa will continue to seek ways to meet its needs for English teaching.